

Art, appetite and desire at Rome’s Chiostro del Bramante

Posted on November 22, 2026 by Benigna Mallebrein

ROME — A fast food restaurant slowly submerged in water and a spiral of watermelons floating in the Dead Sea now share one roof in Rome. Until March 29, 2027, the Chiostro del Bramante presents “Food. Il gusto nell’arte,” or “Food. The Taste in Art,” to mark thirty years of activity and landmark shows.

Curated by Suzanne Landau, the show brings together 190 artworks by more than 60 artists, including Marina Abramović, David LaChapelle, Sophie Calle, Vanessa Beecroft and Yinka Shonibare. “Artists transformed the act of eating and food into a visual language, while reflecting on our identities, politics, social status, pleasures, and taboos,” Landau said.

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/art-appetite-and-desire-at-romes-chiostro-del-bramante/



Autumn, Antonio Rasio and Food Man, Yinka Shonibare (*Credits: Italy Now*)

DART, the organization that runs the Chiostro del Bramante, produced the exhibition. “Food is matter, gesture, knowledge, and care,” said Natalia de Marco, artistic director of DART. “It represents nutrition and health, but equally stands for encounter, heritage, connection, and affection.”

Five centuries on the table

The display spans five centuries across six chapters, including Food and Body, Playing with Food, and Food and Ecology. Paintings, sculptures, videos and sound installations come on loan from museums, institutions, private collectors and artists.

Baroque still lifes meet contemporary work. Bartolomeo Bimbi’s monumental still lifes are set beside Ori Gersht’s Pomegranate, which draws on a seventeenth-century painting to craft an image hovering between beauty and violence. Mat Collishaw restages the last meals of death row inmates in the style of Flemish still lifes.

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Walking through art

Two large installations take over the cloister. Sweet Memories by Simone Post and Pasta Shell Grotto by Bompas & Parr invite visitors to walk inside the works. Ernesto Neto’s suspended installation uses legumes and organic materials, while Carrie Mae Weems presents the kitchen as the stage of everyday life.



Le Régime Cromatique, Sophie Calle (*Credits: Italy Now*)

An audioguide titled “The Taste of Rome” pairs eight artworks with eight Roman food figures, from fruit sellers to market stallholders, who share their own stories. Columnist Giovanni De Stefano conceived the project.

Educational programs include guided tours, school workshops, Sunday family events and tours in Italian Sign Language, known as LIS. The Ospedale Pediatrico Bambino Gesù, Rome’s children’s hospital, adds pediatric nutrition content through QR codes and will bring workshops to young patients from January 2027.

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Do not forget to have your deserved food in the Bistro, decorated with Fallen fruit by David Allen Burns & Austin Young.

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